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MYSTICAL ELEMENTS IN "SATVENNI MOTTI"

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Mumtaz Ali Tajddin S. Ali

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Sayed Nur Muhammad Shah, the son of Sayed Imam Shah (d. 926/1520) bin Pir Hasan Kabiruddin (d. 853/1449) had taken a keen interest with his father in promulgation of Ismailism in Gujrat. Sayed Imam Shah had four sons and daughter by his two wives. Among the sons, Sayed Alam Shah alias Sayed Khaliq Shah, Sayed Ali Shah alias Sayed Bala Shah and Sayed Bakir Shah had expired in childhood. The fourth son, Sayed Nur Muhammad Shah had married the daughter of a certain Rajput, called Punja Sinh of Bhawnagar, who gave birth of Sayed Miran Sayyid Khan. By his second wife, he had two sons, Mustapha and Shahabuddin.

Tradition has it that the religious dues were collected in India and officially deposited at Uchh Sharif in Sind in the main treasury. It is said that after the death of Sayed Imam Shah, a certain Kheta by name, used to collect the religious dues in Gujrat and sent the accumulated funds as usual at Uchh Sharif. Sayed Nur Muhammad is said to have ordered him to deposit the collection of whole Gujrat region at Pirana instead of Uchh Sharif, but Kheta flatly refused, and it is more likely an immediate cause of the schism in the Indian community. There is however a story attests with another tradition that Sayed Nur Muhammad is said to have misguided the Ismailis and his activities were at length reported to the then Imam Nuruddin Ali (922-957/1516-1550), residing in Iran. The tradition further attests that Imam Nuruddin Ali took its serious notice and outcast him by a written order, advising the Indian followers to break their concerns with him. Thus, the Ismailis of Pirana, known as Imam-Shahis dissociated under the leadership of Sayed Nur Muhammad Shah about in 931/1525. He is considered the real founder of Imam-Shahi sect and died in 940/1533.

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epistles (giranth), the most famous are "Satvenni'ji Vel," "Satvarnni Vadi" and "Satvenni Motti." His four small ginans are also accessible in printed form. In this paper, we will discuss only the sufic elements contained in the "Satvenni Motti" (or Satvenni).

The Satvenni was most probably composed during the time of the Ismaili Imam Mustansir billah II, who lived in Iran. In the concluding verses, the name Shah Mustansir billah (868-880/1463-1475) is clearly sounded as the Imam of the age. It tends to understand that the epistle had been composed almost before 880/1475.

The word satvenni is used thrice in the epistle (poem nos. 3, 220 and 221), means "true words" and the work "Satvenni Motti" obviously refers to "the big collection of the true words." It strongly sounds the mystical and spiritual temperament. It exercises a sort of work utilizing the vernacular languages of the subcontinent that was instrumental in carrying the mystical message of Islam through an Ismaili imprint.

Structurally, the epistle is composed of 222 small poems. Each poem is divided into two major parts. The first part consists of 5 couplets (dohra, or doha), which is followed by a refrain (tek, or varanni) as follows: -

Re tunhi mara sacha sanhiyan piyunnji tunhin

(O' You are my true Lord. You alone are the Beloved)

The word re tunhi (O'You) is used as an abbreviation for the entire refrain in the remaining 221 poems. Thus, the addition of the refrain enhances the charm in the recitation.

Each refrain (re tunhi) is further followed by a quatrain (chopai) in the second part of the poem. In other words, the refrain (re tunhi) is placed between the chopai and dohra in each poem. In sum, each poem contains 5 couplets (dohra) of 10 lines, a refrain (re tunhi) of 1 line, and ends with a quatrain (chopai) of 4 lines; making the poem for 15 lines all together. Under this distribution, the whole epistle of 222 poems is governed by 3330 lines. Almost all the verses metrically are without defect, and its language also bears a strong Indian flavor.

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It is also worth consideration that each quatrain (chopai) ends with re syllable. For illustration, medan is written as medan-re, nadan as nadan-re, sujann as sujann're, jann as jann're and vice versa. This is a distinctive feature of the quatrain (chopai) in the epistle, which may be best explained by a brief consideration of the cyclic succession of musical beats (tals) according to which the epistle is meant to be sung.

Another significant feature of the epistle is that its all poems almost contain a separate heading. It seems that the insertion of headings was not projected in the original composition and was a later addition by the scribes of the manuscript of the ginans. The first text in Khojaki character was printed in The Khoja Sindhi Printing Press by Mukhi Laljibhai Devraj (1841-1930) in 1914 at Bombay. Its second edition both in Khojaki and Gujrati again came out in 1920. The third edition was issued by the Ismailia Association for India, Bombay in 1949 in Gujrati.

According to the extant printed text, each poem of the epistle is governed by a separate heading and there are few other poems containing only one heading. Thus, poem nos. 5 to 7 contain one heading, and likewise, the poem nos.10 to 12, poem nos. 13 to 28, poem nos. 36 to 37, poem nos. 41 to 42, poem nos. 59 to 60, poem nos. 65 to 66, poem nos. 79 to 80, poem nos. 102 to 107, poem nos. 116 to 119, poem nos. 136 to 139, poem no. 141 to 143, poem nos. 150 to 151, poem nos. 156 to 160, poem nos. 167 to 196 and poem nos. 209 to 210 contain one separate heading. In brief, only 150 headings have been given for the total 222 poems of the Satvenni Motti.

Mystics in every religion have tended to describe the various steps on the way that led towards God. In Islam, the path (tariqa) on which the mystic walks, has been defined as the path followed by the course of shariah, which is known as Sufism, as well as the path of the fakir. This path or the Sufic tariqa is narrower and more difficult.

According to Holy Koran (77:25) the word fakir means one whose backbone is broken, poor or destitute. The word fakir or fukara occurs 12 times in Koran. In mystical terminology, it means a person who lives for God alone. Shibli, (d. 945) also says in this context that, "al-fakir man la yustaghni bi-shai" (a fakir does not rest content with anything except God). The total rejection of private property (adam tamalluk) and resignation the will of God (tawakkul) were considered

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essential for a fakir who aspired for gnosis (marifat). Thus, the word fakir means to aspire to spiritual poverty or detachment. Among the mystics, fakr is the central virtue, emblematic of all the virtues. The fakir is a Sufi or initiate in the Sufi order. In the Near East, the Persian word darwish, with the same literal meaning is often used in place of fakir in the Sufic orbits. The Satvenni Motti also makes description of the fakir and its tariqa (fakiri) in the following beautiful words: -

Fakiri sab'se afzali, nahi ko isk'e tol're. (24)

"The path of fakir excells above all and none equals it."

Fakiri mahe'n jo ji lagai'e to neh surijan adaka pai'e,
Mintu kera ehi janno kaaj, nabi fakiri'se hu'e mehraj.
Ey'to dawlat hai nabi'yu keri, is'thi badashai nahi bhaleri. (25)

"If one puts his heart in the path of fakir, he will procure immense love for the Lord. This is the only purpose (to be dealt) with the Friend (God) as the Prophet's ascension (miraj) was based on the way of fakir. It is the treasure of the Prophets, and no kingdom is better than it."

Sachi fakiri sat'ki, jo mang'e shah'ku paas.
Dua're rah'e sat saburi'ke, chhod'e bhirani aas're (26)

"The real fakiri belongs to the truth, asking the nearness of the Lord. He (the fakir) resides at the doors of truth and patience and abdicates hopes from others."

Duniya aah'e durijan baat, nabi hu'e so fakiri'j maat. Mahe'n fakiri je koi jalanna, so ja jag'ma nabi kilanna. (24)

"The world is the way of the evils (in which) the (elevated ones) were raised as the Prophets through the path of fakir. Those who kindled in the fakiri, they were proclaimed as the prophets in the world."

In addition, in the poem no.29 to 42, the descriptions of the different prophets have been quoted, indicating that they absolutely followed the path of the fakir, such as Adam, Noah, Moses, Jesus, Solomon, Zacharias, Job, Abraham and Muhammad as well as Bibi Fatima etc.

There are also the mention of the Sufi saints, notably Abraham bin Adam (d. 161/778), the ruler of Balkh, who

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abandoned the rule and took up the ascetic life, as well as Rabia al-Adawiya of Basra (95-185/714-801) as follows: -

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Sultan Ibrahim'ke dekho khela, kiyun kiyun usaku dhulaj mela.
Ket'e baras badashai kitti, oo'n shir ketik bedana bitti.
Khann'e pinn'e ki sudhiya tal'e, iyun kar aapasku prem'e jal'e.
Sab sukh chhodi'ne dukh jalanna, sach'e mint'ka ey hai khanna. (36)

"Lo, the happenings with the king Abraham. How he melted away like a dust? He ruled many years and fell much distress upon him. He abdicated even the care of eating and drinking and by this way he burnt in the love (with God). He abandoned the prosperity and burnt into the agony and this is the food of a true friend."

Dekho Rabia ker'e kaaj, haida'sen'thi jen'e mari laaj.
Rabia aurat dharia nama, marad lajann'e usak'e kaama.
Prem'e sachi hui so mai, oon ja apani deha pakai. (52)

"Lo, the deeds of Rabia, who cast off her prestige in the heart. Rabia is the name assumed by a woman and the men were ashamed on her deeds. She became a true lover and baked her own body (in the flame of love with God)."

Rabia sohagann jug mahe'n kitti, sab koi jann'e desh viditi.
Apas'ku le prem'e jali, sukh na kina un'e surijan tali.
Khan'e pin'e ka swad na sava, sab visari piyun'ke bhava.
Prem piyasi so gar gar dhai, sansar sudhia sab khoi gamai. (46)

"Rabia attained an union in the world, which is known in her abode and abroad. She burnt in the (flame of) love, and did not enjoy prosperity and annihilated in God. She enjoyed no taste of eating and drinking and forgot (all these) in divine love. She wandered door to door as thirsty of love and lost all the worldly cares."

We will turn now to discuss further mystical elements contained in the "Satvenni Motti" in the following lines.

Dhikr means remembrance or recollection. It is a strong pillar in the path toward God, rather the most important pillar, for nobody can reach without constantly remembering Him. Dhikr is based absolutely on the Koranic injunction. The early Sufis found in dhikr a mean of excluding distractions and of

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drawing near to God, and it has come to mean a particular method of glorifying God by the constant repetition of His name by rhythmic breathing. In sum, dhikr is the pivot of mysticism. It is the Alpha and Omega of prayer.

The Sufis have distinguished dhikr into different kinds, such as dhikr al-lisan (remembrance with the tongue), dhikr al-qalb (remembrance with the heart), dhikr al-khafi (secret recollection), etc. When a mystic attains perfect peace in recollection, it is called dhikr al-sultani (the royal recollection). This type of dhikr also is echoed in the Satvenni as under: -

Jibu japanna kaam na aaw'e, ja'n lagi man chit piyun'su na lav'e,
Dil'ki zikar so nishdin kij'e, man'ma sohann chodis'e dij'e. (193)

"The dhikr through the tongue is futile unless one does not concentrate his mind with the Lord; therefore, you perform dhikr in heart day and night and be beautified within by all the ways."

Dil to zinda zikru'n hov'e, zikru'n jivada apana dhov'e. (176)

"The heart becomes alive by dhikr and it is the dhikr that purifies one's soul."

Zikar jo lag'e piya'su, tis'e avar na bhav'e chit're.
Kadva hov'e sab jug, an'e parakh'e apana mint're. (176)

"One who is struck in the dhikr of the Lord, he does not like to cast attention on others. He feels the entire world bitter and (continues to) recognize his own God."

Mehraj rasul jug mahe'n paya, so sab rahenni zika're jagaya. (141)

"The Prophet achieved ascension (miraj) in the world, who has passed all nights through dhikr."

Rehanni beji i's jug'ma, mint milava kaaj're,
Rasul'bi i's rehanni ma'n, ja paya mehraj. (141)

"The night has been ordained in the world for unioning with the God. The Prophet also attained ascension (mihraj) in this very night."

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Ilm iman jitana kitta, nabi'e sara so zikar'e litta.
Khasa khazana jitana kahi'e, so sab apanni dil mah'e lai'ye (196)

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"Whatever the knowledge (ilm) and faith (Imam) have been imparted - these all had been acquired by the Prophets through dhikr. Whatever the best treasures be known, all are to be availed in our hearts."

Gat'ma deval puji'ye, gat'ma mugat didar'e,
Sacha japanna mahe'n ka, fokat japanna bahar're. (164)

"Adore the God in the heart, as the redemption and beholding rest in the heart. The muttering in the heart is a realistic, while the external invocation is futile."

Kurbani kij'e jivaj aapanna, fokat jav'e sab jibu japanna,
Deha jiv kurbani man'ge, jibu japanta to hath na lag'e. (166)

"Make sacrifice of your own soul, as the muttering by tongue results in vain. The soul requires physical sacrifice, which cannot be materialized with the invocation through tongue."

Jen jem jampiy'e man'ma, an'e chava kij'e nitr'e,
Man chit lai'e aapanna, to thamj aaw'e chitr'e (169)

"As and when you start remembrance in the heart, (you also enhance) the love all the times. Ruminate in your mind, so as to bring it at the target." (chit means mind-stuff)

Pashu pankhi sab piya piya kahev'e, surijan kaj'e so jiv na dev'e,
Jiv jant jet'e jug mah'e, piyu piyu kar'e sab thaho thahe'n.
Rabab mah'n bi tunhi tunhi kahe've, surijan sudhiya so til na lev'e,
Mannas mukh'ma bi ey jo vanni, piyun piyun kar'e pann thaat na janni.
Jo koi neh mahe'n laga've, so ja apana surijan pav'e (167)

"All the animals and birds invoke piyu'n piyu'n (God, God), but none lay down their lives for God. The creatures that are in the world, mutter piyu'n piyu'n (God, God) in all places. Even the (word) "you, only you" (tu'nhi tu'nhi) tunes in the rabab (a viol, or a stringed instrument being played with a bow), but none takes slight notice of God. The same remembrance also dwells in the mouth of the human,

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muttering piyu'n piyu'n without knowing Him. One who attaches his love (in dhikr), he will find the God."

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Pothi sheshtra pachasa dhundho, kaha kaha tirath ja kar mundho,
Ket'e dev upasnan kij'e, deval dera ja ja patij'e,
Visvas man'e mahe bahotera lav'e, surijan to ja zikaru pav'e. (173)

"Search out in the ten million books and cut down the hairs while performing ritual pilgrimages. Adore the numerous deities and satisfy with the rites and rituals. (Such persons) procure immense faith (on external practices) within the heart, but (be it known that) the God is attained only by dhikr."

Saas usas'e jap kar dekho, jessa dudh mahe'n maska pekho,
Essa aapasku khoi gamai, sanhiya'n aapanna to ja pai'e. (111)

"You just try to mutter through respiration as if the butter is pulverized in the milk. Likewise, you annihilate yourself (in dhikr), so as to find our Lord."

Hayat dil'ki zikaru pav'e, zikr'e nehada adaka pav'e,
Japanni kam ma karsho koi, to ja dil tera zinda hoi. (175)

"The heart received a (real) life through dhikr. With the dhikr the love is generated profusely. None among you should curtail (the practice of) dhikr, as it will give your heart a life."

Mahe'n essa kheliye'n, jo kiss'e na hov'e jann're,
Gunjaj essi kiji'e, jem aap na buj'e kaan're. (189)

"Play within (the dhikr) in such a manner that no one can know it. You whisper as if your ears even do not take its notice."

Til'bi teer jo banka jav'e, titna had'thi tafavat pav'e,
Dil bi sidha jo na kij'e, to sukh'su menjal kesi lij'e. (192)

"If an arrow is shot with a little difference, it will reach the target with the same difference. Likewise, if the heart is not focused (in concentration), how you will attain the abode with bliss."

The opposite correlative of dhikr is the word fikr (discursive reflection). Fikr (pl. afkar) means thought or reflection. In this context, the Satvenni describes: -

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Jo janno shah pichhanniy'e, to pahel'e aap pichhann're,
Jo kuchh aah'e pichhann'nna, so sab tuj mah'e jann're. (149)

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"First of all you know yourself provided you intend to know God. Whatever is the acquaintance, that all be known within yourself."

Jenn'e aap pichhanniya, piyu'n ji paya soi're. (219)

"One who knows himself, he finds his very God."

Love (mahabba, ishq) is the main article in the mystical path. It includes uns (intimacy), qurb (proximity), shauq (longing), bala (affliction or suffering), or zahma (pain). The Satvenni goes to describe that: -

Pothi padiya bahot kar, mahe'n na laya nehr'e,
So kes'e bhij'e bavar'e, zakar ker'e mehr'e. (191)

"One who studied voluminous books, but enflames no love in heart, how can he become being drenched (in love) as (none is soaked in the) showering of the fog."

Mahe'n prit to essi laiy'e, til bi baher kahi na jaiy'e,
Andh'e prit nainn'e nahi suj'e, manki lagi so koi na buj'e. (189)

"Enflame love inward that cannot be uttered outward a little bit. The love of a blind does not reflect in his eyes, and so the penetration (of love) in the heart also cannot be perceived by others."

There are few other Sufic terminologies in the Satvenni Motti, whose few examples are given below: -

The word khatir (pl. khawatir) among the mystics denotes the ideas that suddenly come into one's heart. In other words, the khawatir, the idea occurring to the heart in the state of retreat, may be of divine or satanic origin, may stem from the heart or from the lower soul. Therefore, the disciple is always in need of a master to instruct him carefully in the deeper meaning of this form or thought during dhikr. According to Satvenni Motti,

Duja choraj mahe'n rahe've, usathi baat so koi na lev'e,
Khatr'e jet'e tiltil kij'e, andh'e, atriyal'e vaat na lej'e. (198)

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"One more robber (evil impulse) resides in the heart and none takes the path from him. The path cannot be achieved at midway blindly if you will be trapped little by little in khatir."

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Dil mahe'n choraj pargada, bada makar tis haath're,
Khaatar dev'e mahe'n thi, betha lev'e bath're. (198)

"The robber manifests in the heart, who is great hypocrite having strong hands. He induces false ideas (khatir) within to entrap."

The need of the master (murshid) is the backbone of the Sufic tariqa, therefore, the Satvenni imparts that: -

Murshid pankh'e koi baat na pav'e, khara khotta sab pargat dikhav'e, Bandagi sagali marag kahi'e, pann murshid pakh'e bhed na lahiy'e. Sheshtra baras jo kij'e bhagati, murshid keri ekaj ratti. (200)

"Without a master (murshid), none attains the path. He imparts clearly what is true or false. The worship (bandagi) as a whole (leading to) a path, but without the master (murshid), we cannot percieve its depth. You may worship (without a master) even for a thousand year, but it is a whit before the master (murshid)."

Murshid diva jai jug,ma, jo aan dikhav'e ser're. (199)

"The master (murshid) is a lamp in the world, who came to show the path."

It must be known that the mystical practice in India is known as the yoga system, which is also described in the Satvenni in the following verses: -

Jogan jog'ki jugati lev'e, sarv katha'ku aadeshaj dev'e,

Kan'e kundal sat'ka bav'e, sachi jogann soi kilav'e. (88)

"The yogi follows the way of the yoga, who initiates with all the stories. He wears the ring of the truth in the ears and this is the real way of the yoga."

Jogi'ku jag dhundhi'ye, aadesh dehi sabr'e,
Shah jo pai'e jog'ka, darshan hov'e tabr'e. (88)

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"Search the (true) yogi in the world, who physically imparts to all. When one recognizes the Lord of the yoga, then it results to the beholding (didar)."

Bekh kar'e thi jugat na aav'e, jogann soi jo darshan pav'e,
Lay apasku aur de mel'e, asan mari jog'su khel'e. (89)

"One who wears the attire (of the yogi), he does not reach the depth. The true yogi is he who finds beholding (didar). He takes little bit for him and abandons for others and through the asthan (pose), he enjoys the yoga practice."

It will perhaps be appropriate to explain here briefly the practice of yoga.

The Sanskrit word yoga is derived from the root yuj means to bind together, hold fast or yoke, which also governs the Latin iungere and iugum, and the French joug and so on. Yoga signifies a union of the individual soul with the Supreme Spirit. It is an old Indian practice, imparting that the man's bondage results identification of the soul with the body and that his liberation is attained through the knowledge of their separateness. Some kinds of yoga are the 1) karma yoga 2) jnana yoga 3) dhiyan yoga 4) mantra yoga 5) laya yoga 6) bhakati yoga 7) surta shabda yoga and 8) hatha yoga.

In short, yoga is an ancient form of mental discipline and physical exercise. Fixity of one-pointed concentration is the key feature of yoga. The Muslim mystics also took deep interest in the tradition of the hatha yoga that greatly resembles to the Sufic tariqa in Islam. For illustration, Qadi Ruknuddin Samarkand lived at Lakhnauti in Bengal during the rule of Sultan Alauddin Mardan (1207-1212). He translated an Indian work on yoga, called "Amrta-Kunda" into Persian, then Arabic. This work deals with the principles of yoga; were known in the Muslim Sufi circles at that time. Later, the yoga practices were adopted by the Indian Sufi orders, such as Ghawthiyya, founded by Shah Muhammad Ghawth of Gawlior (d.1562), who compiled "Bahr al-Hayat," the translation of "Amrta-Kunda." As-Sanusi describes the importance of the 84 poses (asthan), whom he called jalsa, vide his "as-Salsabil al-ma'in" (Cairo, 1935). It was Ibn Ataullah (d. 709/1309), the yoga method reached Egypt, who also wrote a systematic treatise on the dhikr, entitled, "Miftah al-Falah" (Recollection of God).

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The Muslim Sufis termed the yoga as jujiyya Ibn Battuta however named it joki (pl. jokiyya). Biruni made the Arabic translation of the yoga-sutra entitled "Kitab Patanjal al-Hindi fi'l Khalas min al-amthal" (London 1954).

Likewise, the Ismaili missionaries in India also preached the method of dhikr in their prevalent trend of yoga, whose few verses have been quoted above from the Satvenni. In order to elucidate the yoga system mentioned in the ginans, we must take a look on another ginan of Pir Sadruddin with its simple explanation as under: -

Sakhi mahapad keri vaat koi'k jann'e re,
Jen'e satgur maliya saar, sohi pichhan'e re. (1)

"O' Friend! The mystery of the supreme state is seldom known to anyone. It is indeed known to one, who has recognized the true master."

This ginan opens with an emphasis on the necessity of a true master to guide his disciplines, how to tread on the spiritual path as well as the mysteries of the spiritual stages. Without, a true guide, the secrets of spiritual life is hardly known to anyone.

Sakhi nabh kamal ghat mahe'n, ke sohang uthe're,
Tiyan jaamp jamp'e chh'e hans, taar na tute're. (2)

"O' Friend! The solar plexus (nabh kamal) is within the body, wherefrom the (inner sound of) sohang is raised (during respiration). The soul mutters there the jaap (ism or name) without discontinuity of a link."

Nabhi or nabh kamal is a solar plexus, whose location is in the region of the naval, which is also known as kundalini chakra in yoga system, which is also called the lotus of happiness.

The jaap is the divine name, the sum total of His attributes. It is used interchangeably with ajampiya - the jaap that cannot be repeated and goes on within the recess of heart without repetition. Ajampiya jaap, in other words, means an unrepeated repetition or soundless self-invocation, which is called by the Sufis as dhikr-i paas anfaas.

When one inhales, there emanates an inner sound of AHM (which is termed as auhang), and when he exhales the sound becomes SOHAM (which is also termed as sohang). The word

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soham or sohang means, "I AM THAT." The source of sohang is the heart, where these syllables arise with breathing. In other words, between inhalation and exhalation, there is a fraction of a sound, which is absolutely free of thought. That space (between so and ham) is the space of the Truth.

The soul enters into unrepeated repetition without breaking the continuity as if the strings of a musical instrument in one tune.

Sakhi ingla pingla saar, sukhmanna nadi're,
Tiyan chandra suraj mili bey, ke manchha mari're. (3)

"O' Friend! (Within the body) exist ingla, pingla and sukhmanna channels, where the moon (ingla) and the sun (pingla) both meet together when the carnal desires are subdued."

According to the physiological theories of hatha yoga, it was known that there are three principal force channels in the subtle body, i.e., ingla (also called ida), pingla and sukhmanna (also called susumanna). Ingla is lying on the left side of the spinal column and terminating in the right nostril. The pingla is lying on the right side of the spinal column, terminating in the left nostril. In the ginans, these two force channels are termed also as the moon and sun (or the lunar and solar channels). The third force channel is sukhmanna, which passes through the spinal column, originating inside the sacrum and runs up the body and pierces the base of the skull from eyebrows and joins the cerebrum.

The word nadi comes from the root word nad means a motion. Mary Scott writes in "Kundalini in the Physical World" (London, 1983, p. 148) that, "It should be noted that a nadi (force channel) is not a channel which acts, like a vein, as a container. It is a channel in the maritime sense of a stream or current." Richard Hittleman also writes in his "Yoga" (London, 1976, p. 82) that, "These channels (nadis) are not physical veins, arteries or nerves, but subtle conduits through which prana, energy is conveyed from the centers to the physical body."

Now along the sukhmanna force channel are located six or eight discs (or lotuses) and in its base (nabhi or naval) is the kundalini, i.e., a latent power symbolized by the figure of a powerful sleeping serpent. By means of mediation of hatha

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yoga, the kundalini is awakened, pushing the soul as a fuel to ascend the sukhmanna by piercing each disc in turn. At the climax of the ascent, the bharmand is pierced, which is said to be located at the top of the cranium.

The ingla, pingla and sukhmanna, the yogic channels involved in the breathing process, meet together, then the kundalini is awakened. On that juncture, the mind is subsided of its desires.

The word kundalini comes from the adjective kundalin means circular, and as a substantive kundali (snake) could be traced to the verbal root kund (to burn) or kunda (bowl or hole) or kundala (ring or coil of a rope). The Buddhists called it avadhuti (purified one) and the Tibetans as kundar ma or dbus ma. In sum, kundalini is a generator of heat or inner force, which is more subtle than the breath. It is a latent force pushing the soul to elevate upwards. Most of the yogis consider that the ascending force itself is the kundalini, but it is no so. It is a latent power, which released the soul from a prison, so as to enable it to elevate.

Sakhi travenni ghat mahe'n, ke akhand jotti're,
Tiyan jagmag jagmag thai, ke vars'e chh'e moti're. (4)

"O' Friend! The trivenni (confluence or sangam of the three force channels) also exists in the body, profusing imperishable light. There is a glittering as if the pearls are showered."

The junction where the three force channels meet together is called trivenni (confluence), forming a threefold knot in the region of eyebrow center. When it so happened during meditation, there is a profusion of eternal light, glittering and scintillating in such a manner as if the pearls are being poured down like the rain.

Sakhi vanknad mukam, sacho kahiy'e re,
Tiyan nirat surat mili bey, ke parcho laiy'e re. (5)

"O' Friend! The plane of the vanknad (in the body) is absolutely true, wherefrom perceive the marvels when both the bliss (nirat) and the concentration (surat) are submerged."

The vanknad means a serpentine coiled force channel, which is the actual realm of the kundalini. The vanknad is said to be three and half times coiled up just a cloak-wise in a circular form. When it is awakened through meditation, it starts to

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expand anti-cloak-wise with a latent power, known as the kundalini.

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Sakhi etla sarv'e nishan, meliya nicha're,
Bhai tethi oonchar'e desh, ke chadva ooncha're. (6)

"O' Friend! All the (above stated) signs (or stages, muqam) have been left below. O' brother! There is yet another lofty realm considerably higher to be ascended."

Rising towards the climax, nevertheless, these indications are still to be considered low. The Ultimate destination is yet at a lofty realm and one has to ascend still higher path, a path leading to the Ultimate Reality, the Absolute Truth.

This is the stage that has been described as an abode of paradise. The purpose of the dhikr should not to gain paradise. It is not the highest truth to be attained. If one has seen light and reached to paradise, he is yet on the highest mental plane. One must rise higher than the paradise. One's aim should always be to reach the Spirit. The famous Sufi saint, Mansur al-Hallaj (244-309/858-922) had the paradise ever present, but he rejected it, saying, "why should I be content with paradise? I shall not rest till I taste the essence. Till then I shall always strive ahead."

When the seeker passes through various stages, he acquires innumerable psychique powers, but a real seeker strives to reach ahead to gain the ultimate goal. The aim of the seeker should always be to reach the Spirit, not merely to obtain a feeling of pleasure through dhikr. Most of the seekers are said to have become content on that stage and forgot to go ahead, and started performing miracles to impress their followers.

Sakhi panch kosh par gaam, ke nishan dhari're,
Tiyan dhari surat'nu dhiyan, ke swasso mari're. (7)

"O' Friend! The (ultimate) abode lies at the (distance of) five kos (one kos equals 2 miles), wherefrom the target of concentration is focused through subduing the breathing."

It implies that the seeker almost reached the Supreme stage, and yet he has to strive more to goal the final destination. It tends to indicate symbolically that the seeker has supposedly crossed the distance of almost 90 miles and he has yet to walk further 10 miles.

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Sakhi sagara rom'e rom, laaga japva're,
Tar'e sagara ghat'na chor, laaga chhupava're. (8)

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"O' Friend! (The condition of the body on that stage becomes such that) all the hairs start muttering (the jaap), forcing all the evil impulses in the body to be hidden."

This is a stage in contemplation when one's complete being is involved in remembrance. The seeker is so engrossed in meditation that there is no place for the evil impulses and the wordly desires to exist.

Sakhi pind tanni khabar, sagari visri're,
Jiyar'e surti chadi bharmand, futti nisri're. (9)

"O' Friend! When the soul ascends at bharmand, emanating piercingly, all the physical senses are effaced."

The bharmand or bhamar-gufa is a den, lies at the root of nose betwix the two eyebrows or cerebrum.

When the seeker is absorbed in deep meditation, he forgets the existence of his body. He feels himself flying high and high spiritually. In such a state, the seeker involved transcends all the barriers and finds himself identified with the Cosmic Will.

We will pause here for a while to sum up the above spiritual process. The soul ascends from its base, piercing the centers one by one and finally absorbed into the highest center located in the brain. The brain center is identified with the Supreme Cosmic principle or the Braham for the Hindus, the Great Void (maha sunya) for the Buddhists and stong pa chen for the Tibetans.

According to the ginanic theory, there are many centers from the low to the high, the principal ones are four,such as mul kamal, nabh kamal, bhamar gufa and das duar, which according to the Yogic traditions are muladhara chakra (scared plexus), manipura chakra (solar plexus), brahama chakra (cerebrum) and sahasrara chakra (the realm above cerebrum). These centers (or chakra or discs) are described by the Sufis as latif-i nafsi, latif-i ruhi, latif-i khafi and latif-i akhfa.

Sakhi arash kurash'na kot, joya nirkhi're,
Evva sapt dip nav khand, joya nirkhi're. (10)

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"O' Friend! (on that high stage) are observed examingly the castles all around the arsh and kursi (in the heaven) and have seen the seven depa and nine khand."

On this stage, the seeker witnesses the arsh (the divine power or authority) and the kursi (the divine knowledge) in the heaven and examines the seven depa (peninsulas) and nine khand (continents). It means that the whole universe, the marvel of the entire creation is surrounded by him. This would also mean that the seeker has gained all the knowledge and secrets of these realms.

Sakhi ved kitab ma'nh'e, ke ey gam nahi're,
Tiyan nahi divas, nahi raat, ke dhup na chha'n're. (11)

"O' Friend! Such (spiritual) experience is not described in the book (like) Vedas for there (in the realm) is neither day or night, nor the sunshine or shadow."

Himself being a seeker, Pir Sadruddin goes on to describe the account of his spiritual vision and says that it is not found in reading or studying the scripture like the Veda, because it is a place where there is no day, no night, no heat or shadow. This spiritual experience is not a product of time. It transcends time and space.

Sakhi keva sarikho nathi, ke maro sami're,
Ey to jova sarikho chh'e, alakh anami're. (12)

"O' Friend! (the greatness of) my Lord (that I have spiritually seen) is indescribable (in literal words). He, the Ineffable and Nameless God is only perceivable (spiritually)"

The deepest spiritual experience is a Mysterium Ineffable. The moment of ecstasy or the overwhelming nearness of God's reality have been known that the nearness is like the redeeming of a mute who has no tongue to express his dream. God's cosmic personality is so unique that it is absolutely beyond one's measure to describe in human language, therefore the seeker cannot express the feelings he experienced what in actuality is the Absolute Reality, Who can be known by seeing Him through deep meditation.

Sakhi alakh anami saheb, laaga mith're,
Bhann'e Pir Sadardin sham, me'n najar'e ditha're. (13)

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"O' Friend! The Ineffable and Nameless Lord was felt sweetest. Pir Sadruddin says that the Lord (Sham), I have (spiritually) seen."

When the seeker reaches the final ultimate stage, he utters "I am God." When one is spiritually oriented, the barrier between the subject and the object is melting away and merged into One Single Unit. This is the final goal, the annihilation of the ego. In that glory is no "I" or "You". Both "I" and "You" become one reality. This moment of union is priceless and more than any other external practices. Hence, Pir Sadruddin, the seeker of Ultimate Reality, concludes his ginan by saying that he has seen the Unseen, the Nameless, whom he found so sweet, so dear and so affectionate. In sum, the seeker started from the state of cause and effect and finally reaches the state of infinity. Hence, with the dint of dhikr, one unevils different layers of the Absolute Reality and ultimately reaches the stage of Supreme Identity.

In conclusion, a seeker must strive but the eternal bliss is not his right, it depends upon the divine grace only. Gopi Krishna writes in his "The Secret of Yoga" (London, 1972, p. 115) that, "Grace is in a way a responsive gesture from the Unseen, a sign of assent from Divinity or a sort of permit from the Almighty Cosmic Forces to a deserving aspirant to approach the Ineffable, normally beyond the reach of ordinary mortals."

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